



July-August 2002

The Bay Leaf

California Native Plant Society • East Bay Chapter • Alameda & Contra Costa Counties

Calendar of Events

Plant Sale, p. 3

Tuesdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Tuesdays, August 6, 13, 20, 27

Native Here Nursery, p. 3

Tuesdays, collect seed for propagation. Leave Native Here at 9 a.m.

Fridays, Native Here Nursery open 9-noon.

Saturdays, Native Here Nursery open 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Sunday, July 21, **How To Grow Local Native Plants class** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Sunday, July 28, **How To Grow Local Native Plants class** 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Native Plant Restoration Team, p. 3

Saturday, July 6, 10 a.m.

Saturday, August 3, 10 a.m.

Saturday, September 7, 10 a.m.

Chapter Picnic, see below.

Saturday, August 17, 3:00 p.m.

Field Trip, p. 2

Saturday, August 17, 9 a.m.

Annual East Bay Chapter Picnic

Celebrate the beauty of our California summer at the annual East Bay Chapter picnic. This year the picnic will take place on Saturday, August 17, beginning at 3:00 p.m., at the Regional Parks Botanic Garden (at the intersection of South Park Drive and Wildcat Canyon Road in Tilden Park, Berkeley). Come join old and new friends in a beautiful setting to savor great food and drink, win native plants in a raffle, travel the state (botanically) on a garden tour, play challenging and wacky plant games (fun for the whole family), listen to mellow live music, and enjoy the company of fellow native plant enthusiasts.

Bring a dish to share (main dish, salad, side dish, or dessert). We'll provide beverages and utensils, a great native plant raffle, games, music, books and posters to buy, and tours of the Botanic Garden. Mother Nature will provide the warm summer weather (the Fog Goddess permitting).

To get to the Garden, take Highway 24 to the Fish Ranch Road exit (just east of the Caldecott Tunnel). Follow Fish Ranch Road up the hill to Grizzly Peak Boulevard. Turn right on Grizzly Peak and follow it for 1.5 miles to South Park Drive. Turn right on South Park Drive and follow it for 1.5 miles to Wildcat Canyon Road. Turn left on Wildcat Canyon Road for one block and then turn right on Anza View Drive. Park along the lawn side of Anza View Drive and

enter the Garden through the open gate on Anza View. (The restrooms are located in the main parking lot on Wildcat Canyon Road at South Park Drive.)

If you need assistance with access to the picnic site or have mobility concerns, please call or e-mail Sue at 510-496-6016 / rosacalifornica@earthlink.net.

Sue Rosenthal

Membership

Our chapter had exhibits this spring at several **Earth Day** and **Watershed Celebrations**—Richmond, Berkeley, Regional Parks Botanic Garden in Tilden Park, San Leandro Creek, Heather Farm Garden Faire in Walnut Creek, Fremont Steelhead Festival, the Oakland Wildflower Show and the Alameda County Fair. Special thanks to Kathy Kramer, who lent us a professional display about native and invasive plants. It enabled us to be at three events on the same day as well as enhancing our usual display. We experimented with making leaf rubbings of native plants for a hands-on activity.

Thanks to Rob Kirby, Nancy Hanna, Yulan Tong, Dorothy Frantz, Michele Lee, Janet Gawthrop, Tony

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Morosco, Elaine Jackson, Phoebe Watts, Jenny Fleming, and John Taylor, who together greeted hundreds of people for CNPS this spring.

September 8 is the **Solano Stroll** in Albany and Berkeley. The theme this year is "1000 Cranes", a wish for peace. Have an idea? We will need helpers here. Please e-mail me, Delia Taylor, at deliataylor@mac.com or telephone (510) 527-3912 for information and to help out.

Delia Taylor

May Field Trip Report

Two of the field trips were a driving tour of Mines Road/San Antonio Valley Road/Del Puerto Canyon Road in Alameda, Santa Clara, and Stanislaus counties on May 11, and a hike in Los Trancos Open Space Preserve and in Portola State Park, both in southern San Mateo County, on May 26.

There were 21 of us on the Mines Road trip, in five cars. Almost all the land is private, so we could only look between the road and the fences. But there was a lot to see! It has been a reasonably good rain year. Flowering on Mines Road starts in late March or early April (phacelias, Johnny jump-ups — *Viola pedunculata*, goldfields, lupines). We were seeing the second round, with most of those gone, except lupines, some of which were still blooming. The stops included (mileage from the start of Mines Road in Livermore) 5.8 miles, with California larkspur (*Delphinium californicum*) and bee plant (*Scrophularia californica*), then two stops with yellow and white mariposa lilies (*Calochortus luteus* and *C. venustus*), then at 14.7 miles, golden currant (*Ribes aureum*) and mountain mahogany (*Cercocarpus betuloides*). Next was desert olive (*Forestiera pubescens*) at 18.5 miles. One high point was 36.3 miles (distance from the start of Mines Road, but on San Antonio Valley Road), with a bank of blazing star (*Mentzelia lindleyi*), chia (*Salvia columbariae*), and thorn mint (*Acanthomintha obovata*). Another was the intersection of Mines Road and Del Puerto Canyon Road. We had lunch there, surrounded by purple larkspur (probably *Delphinium variegatum*), blow-wives (*Achyrachaena mollis*), owl's clover and valley tassels (*Castilleja exserta* and *attenuata*), *Allium amplexans*, and vernal pool mint (*Pogogyne serpylloides*). On Del Puerto Canyon Road, which runs into Stanislaus County and out to I-5, we saw California milkweed (*Asclepias californica*), another larkspur (*D. parryi*), more blazing stars, the beautiful and uncommon fairy fans (*Clarkia breweri*), and jimson weed (*Datura stramonium*). The trip

started at 10:00 a.m. at the Dublin BART Station. We were back there a little after 5:00 p.m.

Los Trancos Open Space Preserve is on Page Mill Road, not far from Skyline. It combines grassland with an oak forest. Blooming is typically later than elsewhere, perhaps from the elevation. The grassland had plenty of checker bloom (*Silene alba*), native dandelion (*Agoseris* sp.), blow-wives and silver puffs (*Uropappus lindleyi*), and Ithuriel's spear (*Tritelea laxa*). There was also gum plant (*Grindelia* sp.) and yellow Mariposa lilies. In the forest, there was the high point of the hike: striped and spotted coralroot (*Corallorhiza striata* and *C. maculata*). The spotted was the unspotted form, with a pure white lip instead of a purple spotted one. A pale iris grew throughout the preserve, probably a hybrid of *douglasiana* and *fernaldii*. There were lots of white globe lily plants (*Calochortus albus*) but none yet in bloom. After Los Trancos, we went to Portola State Park, which is west of Skyline off Alpine Road. There was another *Calochortus* (*C. tolmiei*, purple pussy ears) and the very rare *Pedicularis dudleyi* (in fruit). The western azalea (*Rhododendron occidentale*) down by Pescadero creek was just starting to bloom, but the Douglas iris (*Iris douglasiana*) was out in force.

David Margolies

Field Trips

On Saturday, August 17, at 9 a.m., Laura Hanson will lead a half day field trip to wetlands managed by the California Department of Fish and Game to see *Cordylanthus* in bloom; participants may also see arrow grass (*Triglochin*), late-blooming wild roses, pickleweed (*Salicornia*), salt grass (*Distichlis*) and tule (*Scirpus*) species. Long pants and rubber boots are optimal attire for passage through a few wet, muddy areas with heavy growth. Bring water, insect repellent, and lunch, if desired.

Directions: Take the Marina Vista exit from 680, which is the last exit before the bridge over the strait. Go to the right from the exit ramp, away from Martinez, along Waterfront Road. Continue 1 mile past the McNabny Marsh area to the guard gate for the Ultramar Refinery. Let the guard know that you are going to the fishing access area, not the refinery. After passing the gate, go straight to the gravel parking lot. Meet Laura at 9:00 a.m. in the parking area. Participants may wish to bring along any anglers in their lives.

Janet Gawthrop

Resolution of the EBCNPS Board of Directors

Berkeley's Zoning Adjustment Board (ZAB) approved a variance for a new Berkeley Hills Fire Station adjacent to an entrance to Tilden Regional Park. The ZAB originally specified that the station's landscaping be done with native plants. However, the notice of decision includes non-native plants such as vinca, bamboo, liquidamber and Monterey pine. A Grizzly Peak neighbor appealed the ZAB decision to the Berkeley City Council.

The Board found the proposed landscape plan unsatisfactory from two perspectives: 1) as an example of fire-hazard reduction, and 2) as a demonstration of how to use locally native plants in an urban/wildlife interface zone.

A motion was made and seconded to send a letter to the Berkeley City Council in support of an appeal of the Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board decision to approve a variance for a new Hills Fire Station at 3000 Shasta Road. The motion passed.

Charli Danielsen, Peter Rauch, and Jim Sharp volunteered to draft the letter. The letter will include a list of recommended native plants.

Michele Lee

Plant Sale Activities

Potting Sessions

Tuesdays July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30
 August 6, 13, 20, 27



Summer months for our volunteers call for an all-out effort to transplant growing plants to larger containers. Everyone is welcome to join us at the potting table for this rewarding phase of our propagation program, to handle the plants and learn their names and characteristics. We'll add the gardening tips, movie and book reviews, and favorite recipes of a typical Tuesday up at the nursery.

Stay for our bag lunch break at noon if you can.

The campus parking fee is 50 cents, payable at the machine outside the gate.

For further information call 925-376-4095.

Shirley McPheeters

Native Here Nursery

Although summer is a terrible time to plant natives in one's yard or field, it is a very busy time for the nursery in other ways: seed is ripening all over the two counties. Anyone is welcome to join "the regulars" who set out from the nursery gate (101 Golf Course Drive in Tilden Park) at 9 a.m. each Tuesday, armed with coin envelopes and letters of permission to collect seeds. Usually the group returns to the nursery gate by 1 p.m. Destinations are often determined at the last minute, depending on where likely plant candidates are in seed. Friday and Saturday mornings there is plenty to do, moving the little seedlings from last year's seeds into containers for sale, watering and making sure plants are getting adequate shading, weeding and grooming of plants, etc.

We do sell plants, too, during the summer months, but recommend either holding them in the pots until fall planting, or planting them where they can get extra tender loving care until the rains take over. Lyn Talkovsky, Margot Cunningham and Charli Danielsen are offering a class, **How To Grow Local Native Plants**, on Sunday, July 21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the nursery, and again on Sunday, July 28 at the same time and place. The July 21 class is full, but there may still be places available in the July 28 class. Pre-registration is required, and there is a fee of \$25 per participant. Call Lyn at 510/231-5912, or e-mail charlid@pacbell.net to pre-register.

Charli Danielsen

Native Plant Restoration Team

Sixteen members of the Team had great success pulling yellow star-thistle (YST) at the EBRPD's Skyline Serpentine Prairie in Oakland. The site looks great, with definite reduction in YST after four years of Team effort. We enjoyed flowering *Calochortus*, *Clarkia*, yarrow, *Hemizonia*, and a host of other beauties. What a treasure! If you don't know this spot, get out there and check it out.

In July, we will work on yellow star-thistle and Italian thistle control at Charli Danielsen's long-term grassland restoration project at Mt. Diablo. Meet at 10 a.m. on Saturday, July 6 in the field on your left just before the Mitchell Canyon entrance to the State Park. Be prepared for sun and thistles.

On Saturday, August 3, meet at 10 a.m. at the Berkeley Waterfront to pull yellow star-thistle with Susan Schwartz to further her long term effort to reduce this nasty weed in the new Eastshore State Park. Take

the University Ave. Exit off I-80, go west, pass the Seabreeze Market; keep going west, and at the stop sign, hang a right and meet where the road takes a 90 degree turn to the left (look for the weed warriors brandishing tools and the lady with the white hair). We'll meet at 10 a.m. at the north end of Marina Blvd., opposite the Radisson and next to the east entrance to Cesar Chavez Park. Bring water, hat, sturdy shoes, and a favorite weeding tool if you have one. Remember the waterfront can be windy. Check the upcoming *Bay Leaf* for details.

Saturday, September 7, 10 a.m.: Joint work party with the Friends of Strawberry Creek, in Berkeley, at Strawberry Creek Park.

As I wrote in the last *Bay Leaf*, I have handed over the Chair of the Team to the lovely and talented Sarah Ginskey. My best wishes to her and to the great volunteers who have made this job an honor and a privilege.

Noah Booker

Pitkin Marsh Indian Paintbrush: California's Rarest Plant?

Readers familiar with Californian plants from the days before the *Jepson Manual* may remember that Munz, Mason and other authors included among the Indian Paintbrush species a rare one with yellow flowers called *Castilleja uliginosa* Eastw. It was known only from Pitkin Marsh in Sonoma County, a highly threatened place famous for its lily, *Lilium pardalinum* ssp. *pitkinense*. Readers who consult the *Jepson Manual*, however, will find *C. uliginosa* "downgraded" to synonymy with the more widespread mountain species *C. miniata*, although it does get an honorable mention in a statement that "Plants from Pitkin Marsh . . . have been called *C. uliginosa*". Worse news seems to follow when the *CNPS Inventory of Rare Plants* (2001) is consulted. This treats *C. uliginosa* as a true species but lists it as "presumed extinct".

Fortunately, I can report more positively about the Pitkin Marsh Indian Paintbrush. Thanks to the efforts of Margriet Wetherwax, Holly Forbes, John Domzalski and others, a living plant of *C. uliginosa*, originally collected as a cutting by the late Larry Heckard, lives on in the UC Botanical Garden at Strawberry Canyon, where it has been propagated into three flower pots – not a wide range, but alive nevertheless! Moreover, I was fortunate to be able to photograph flowering stems in one pot recently, and

can comment that it doesn't look much like the typical *C. miniata* I have seen many times in the wild. First, the inflorescence is a clear attractive lemon yellow, with none of the usual red of *C. miniata*. Also, the inflorescence is longer and narrower, and does not show the rather large and spreading flowers of *C. miniata* (see photos). In shape, but not color, it does resemble a rare subspecies of *C. miniata* called *C. miniata* ssp. *elata*, but this variety differs in other ways and is confined to serpentine mountain bogs hundreds of miles from Pitkin Marsh.

The current "known range" of *C. uliginosa* – three flower pots – makes it probably the rarest of all living Californian plants. One other Californian plant, Franciscan Manzanita, is now known only in cultivation, but is more widely grown. Like other *Castilleja* species, *C. uliginosa* is hemi-parasitic and may be difficult to grow extensively in cultivation without the skilled attention of the expert staff at the UC Botanical Garden. *C. uliginosa* remains listed by the State of California as a recognized endangered species.

Several lessons emerge from the story of *C. uliginosa*. It illustrates the importance of keeping living collections of our rarest plants in cultivation as an insurance policy against extinction. This has received scant attention from CNPS until now, and some in the Society have even voiced opposition to it. It is almost seen as not quite "politically correct" – there is a view that a plant in cultivation isn't "really" saved. This may perhaps be related to a larger trend away from saving individual species and towards overall habitat conservation. No one in the State CNPS rare plant program seems to have been aware of the existence of *C. uliginosa* in cultivation. My own view, shared by many professional botanists, is that conserving habitat should in no way dilute our efforts to protect living material of every threatened native species and variety in the State. I was able to see and enjoy *C. uliginosa* because Larry Heckard had the common sense to take a cutting from the last known patch of this species in the wild before it too was lost to habitat degradation. Let's follow his example by making sure that each of our other plants that are comparably rare are also maintained for others to see in the future. This includes keeping "safe" populations in our botanical gardens as well as vigorous efforts to preserve native habitat.

The Department of Fish and Game is currently trying to save the remaining remnants of Pitkin Marsh. Perhaps one day *C. uliginosa* can be re-introduced into its original habitat, and can thrive along with the other rarities that occur there. Paradoxically, current laws provide stronger protection against re-introducing endangered species into habitat where they might not survive than they do against preventing their loss

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Vacant

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CNPS Home Page: <http://www.cnps.org>

East Bay Chapter CNPS Home Page:

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Bay Leaf &

Board meeting minutes online

Chapter CNPS-EB-Alerts E-mail List:

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Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

I wish to affiliate with:

____ East Bay Chapter (Alameda and Contra Costa Counties)

____ Other _____

Membership category:

____ Student, Retired, Limited income, \$20

____ Individual, Library, \$35

____ Household, Family, or Group, \$45

____ Supporting, \$75

____ Plant lover, \$100

____ Benefactor, \$500

____ Life, \$1000

E-mail _____
(optional)

Mail application and check to: California Native Plant Society, 1722 J Street, Suite 17, Sacramento CA 95814

from such places in the first place. This will make it difficult to re-introduce the plant until legal protection is afforded to the re-introduction site, even when sufficient living material is generated in cultivation. Again, CNPS may want to re-visit policy issues concerning re-introductions, so that its own voice can be heard on the side of common sense in cases where legal details can sometimes be accidentally counter-productive. In the meantime, let's wish both the UC Botanical Garden and the Department of Fish and Game every success in efforts to amplify living material of this attractive plant and to protect its potential habitat.

John Game



Castilleja uliginosa Eastw. at the UC Botanical Garden in May 2002. Photo by John Game



Castilleja miniata Dougl. ex Hook. ssp. *miniata* in the Klamath Mountains, July 2000. Photo by John Game

Activities of Others

Hands-On Native Plants

A program of the Friends of the San Francisco Estuary, this is a Richmond/San Pablo youth-operated business located in Richmond High School dedicated to the enhancement of native vegetation in our watershed. They propagate native plants for school or small-scale restoration projects, provide assessments of sites to determine the best plants, help design, install and maintain the new native landscape.

Contact Hands-On Native Plants at 510 215-2539 or see the website at <http://sfep.abag.ca.gov> or call Ta-Hina Warrick or Halima O'Neil at 510-622-2337

Restoration Conference

"Restoration with a View: Sustaining Fragile Habitats"

California Society for Ecological Restoration (SERCAL) is having its Ninth Annual Conference in North Lake Tahoe, 24 —27 October 2002.

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East Bay Chapter
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